

1. **Post-Registration Qualifications Framework**

The President attended a meeting on 10 February 2003 to discuss this topic.

The supporting paper is attached.

DEVELOPING A SHARED FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONAL LEARNING BEYOND REGISTRATION

The Department of Health will work with other stakeholders to create a Framework to support the way health care professionals learn once they are registered. We want to use the Framework to improve the educational and development opportunities for health care professionals and consequently to improve the quality of patient care.

What is the Framework for ?

The Framework will provide a common definition and approach to post-registration learning and development. It will support commissioning and quality assurance. The Framework will identify the levels and types of learning and development available and so will help deliver the right opportunities, in the right places at the right time. It will identify a credit framework that will enable skills to be used more portably across the health sector. It will strengthen the development of learning for professionals at all stages of their careers.

The Framework will encourage shared learning across professions and at different levels of practice. It will set out the standards and processes that govern learning and development for professionals through formal education and in the workplace. It will not be prescriptive about content, methods of delivery or about who should have the opportunity to benefit. We also want to look at the management structures needed to deliver the Framework effectively.

How will we develop the Framework ?

We will invite tenders to develop the Framework. The work will be done in collaboration with all the interested parties. It will build on existing processes and development work and will link to other Human Resources policies.

We will invite professional and regulatory bodies, NHS employers, Workforce Development Confederations, education providers, Department for Education and Skills, other UK countries and patients and carers to join in the project.

Policy links include the Agenda for Change Knowledge and Skills Framework National Occupational Standards, National Service Frameworks and Care Group Workforce Teams and the Changing Workforce Programme. The development of the proposed NHSU and the lifelong learning strategy for the NHS as set out in *Working Together, Learning Together* will also be important factors.

The first stage of the project will establish common definitions of post-registration learning and development and map existing provision, processes and structures. Stage two will develop the Framework itself in the light of the first stage.

What will the Framework project cover ?

- Post-registration learning and Continuing Professional Development for all health professionals currently within the scope of statutory regulation and those professions whom we expect to come under regulation in the foreseeable future.

- Any education or development leading to re-registration – including provision for health professionals employed in research, education or management.

The range of approaches, definitions, cultures and stages of development across the professions means the work will be challenging and complex. For example :

- the dividing line between post-registration education and CPD is blurred and needs to be understood more clearly
- emerging new roles within professions at different levels have exposed the need for better defined and understood specialist, advanced and consultant levels of practice
- much of the work being done in related areas available. The Framework must be open to continual review and updating as knowledge changes.

What are the most important outcomes ?

A common definition and understanding of CPD and post-registration learning across all professions, shared by the stakeholders, to support existing and new levels of practice beyond initial registration.

The identification of a shared credit framework that will enable skills to be used more portably.

Agreed standards and processes for supporting and aligning new and existing education and development.

Recommendations for implementing, evaluating and reviewing the Framework and the structures needed to support it.

How long will it take to develop ?

We expect that it will take about a year from letting the contract to launching the Framework. We will then begin implementation and look at the possibility of extending it to cover other professions and groups of staff over time.

Stakeholder List

NHS Workforce Development Confederations

**General Medical Council
General Dental Council
Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice
Specialist Training Authority
General Optical Council
Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain
Health Professions Council
Nursing and Midwifery Council
General Chiropractors Council
General Osteopaths Council
General Social Care Council**

**Allied Health Professions Forum
Confederation of Healthcare Science**

**Royal College of Nursing
Royal College of Midwives
AMICUS-CPHVA
Community and District Nursing Association
Ambulance Service Association**

**NHS Confederation
BMA
UNISON
AMICUS-MSF**

**Academy of Royal Medical Colleges
Council of Heads of Medical Schools
Council of Deans
Universities UK
TOPSS England
Learning & Skills Council
Skills for Health (SSC)
Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)
QAA
QCA**

**DfES
Scottish Executive
Welsh Assembly
DHSS Northern Ireland
NHS Education Scotland
NHSU (National Health Service University)**